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REVIEWS

Sociological Study of the Bible. By LOUIS WALLIS. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1912. Pp. xxxv+308. \$1.50 net, postpaid, \$1.68.

This book is not a detailed presentation of Semitic, and particularly of Hebrew, culture along the lines marked out by Wellhausen, Robertson Smith, and Barton in their well-known works. One must seek elsewhere for an exposition of the religion of Israel on its external side, or for an account of the methods and results of the higher criticism. The author is interested in the evolution of ideas rather than of social institutions. He here attempts the difficult task of explaining in sociological terms the process by which the religion of the Bible came into being. His main contribution to this subject will be found in Part III dealing with the "Development of Bible Religion." It is unfortunate that Mr. Wallis did not devote all his space to the elucidation of this theme. One could easily spare the extended "Prefatory" which tells us nothing not set forth in the body of the book, the unnecessary "Forewords," and the very sketchy chapters which discuss Christianity and the social problem.

Mr. Wallis has developed a novel thesis in an ingenious and original manner. The problem is to explain how the religious experience of Israel arose from lower to higher things, how the Yahweh idea worked itself out in the consciousness of the Hebrew people. Most modern writers have been content to refer to the prophets as the chief agency in the reconstruction of biblical religion. Mr. Wallis argues that this view is inadequate, since it ignores the peculiar circumstances, both social and religious, under which Hebrew nationality developed. The Hebrew people came into existence in the land of Canaan as a result of a lengthy process of fusion between migratory, clannish Israelites and settled, civilized Canaanites, or "Amorites," as our author prefers to call them. A great and long-continued opposition arose between the standpoints of these two divisions of the Hebrew people. It was symbolized as a struggle between the national god Yahweh and the various local gods or Baals of the Amorite communities. Yahweh was identified with warfare against these "other gods." He was further interpreted by the greater prophets as the patron of that *mishpat*, or customary

morality, which belongs to primitive clan groups. The contest between these opposing religions and social ideals continued throughout Hebrew history until the period of the exile. The destruction of Hebrew nationality by the captivity came to be regarded as a vindication of the prophetic teachings; it enlarged the spiritual outlook of the Hebrews, and prepared the way for the conception of a redeeming God, the Savior of mankind.

Whether or not Mr. Wallis be held to have proved his thesis, he certainly deserves much credit for an insistence on sociological factors in the making of Hebrew religion. His work will doubtless form a starting-point for future investigation in this field. To the reviewer it seems that the author has not sufficiently reckoned with all the aspects of what is, confessedly, an intricate situation. For instance, he treats Hebrew religious and social evolution as if it were unaffected by contact with either Babylonian or Egyptian civilization. The possible influence of Egypt is dismissed in a single note (p. 100, note 1); the very probable influence of Babylonia, not only on Hebrew institutions but even on the Hebrew idea of Yahweh, is not discussed at all. It is not necessary to be either a pan-Babylonian or a pan-Egyptian in order to emphasize the fact that the spiritual development of the Hebrews, a people situated at the center of the ancient oriental world, must be studied in its cultural relations. Archaeology and history, as well as sociology, can throw light on the "development of Bible religion." Furthermore, it may be questioned whether the antagonism between Amorite and Israelite was so prolonged and deep-seated as the author argues. There seems reason to believe that agricultural customs and agricultural laws were of much earlier date than the monarchical period of Hebrew history. It would follow, therefore, that the nomadic ideal and clan organization of the Israelites could not have been so momentous a factor in Hebrew religious evolution during the pre-exilic period. This conclusion, if accepted, would cut at the roots of Mr. Wallis' argument. The whole subject of Hebrew social customs requires, indeed, more investigation than it receives in this volume.

The book is marred by faults of presentation which will detract from its recognition by scholars. It is very loosely put together. There are only 300 pages, yet these are divided into as many as 37 chapters of which 15 contain 4 pages or less. In consequence of this arrangement, the reader is not impressed, as he should be, by the continuity of the argument. Some unnecessary repetitions occur. The paragraph on p. xxxii reappears as a footnote to p. 3, and also on pp. 296-97. The quotation on p. xxiii confronts us again on p. 14. Other instances of the

same sort are found at pp. xxix and 96, at pp. 86 and 99, and at pp. 159 and 243 (notes). One finds, too, throughout the work a number of expressions which, however permissible in popular lecturing, seem out of place in a professedly scientific treatise. Thus, "the Hebrews had no patent on ethics" (p. xxix); the contest between Israelite and Amorite *mores* was "a head-on collision between moral codes" (p. 146); the prophets who upheld the kings and wealthy classes were the "regulars," while the Amos-prophets were the "insurgents" (p. 165); the Bible is one of the "best sellers" known to the book trade (275), etc. Only two misprints have been noted: "Fraser" (p. 64, note) should be "Frazer"; "Heidentumes" (p. 299) should be "Heidentums."

HUTTON WEBSTER

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

The New Democracy. An Essay on Certain Political and Economic Tendencies in the United States. By WALTER E. WEYL. New York: Macmillan, 1912. Pp. viii+370. \$2.00.

The author starts with a discussion of the fact that after more than a century of independence we have modified our attitude from that of teachers of the world to one of profound discontent with the results of our institutions and are now looking to some of the newer and formerly more insignificant nations for lessons in the real democratization of politics and industry. At the point at which we might have developed a democracy the conquest of the continent made a more imperative demand upon us and we forsook the former task for the latter. The author describes the movement of the frontier and the political and industrial pre-emption of country and finally of city by bosses and financiers. The individualistic spirit which this conquest of the West gave to Americans retarded the attainment of a socialized democracy. Dr. Weyl does not bring out here the favorable effect upon democracy of the frontier which Turner and others have so strongly emphasized. He describes the growth of a powerful plutocracy first in industry and then in politics and gives an estimate of its influence at the present time. He admits the service which the industrial combination first performed for our economic life, in bringing order out of chaos and in substituting utilization of our resources for reckless waste. He does not fall into the error of asserting that they have performed a similar service for politics, but very strongly emphasizes their control of courts and legislatures and of public opinion through newspaper and magazine.

The author is extremely sanguine, however, regarding the evolution of a new social democracy in America. He points to our vast and increas-